

## **Brand model creation for a small healthcare service**

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<b>Title of report</b> Brand model creation for a small healthcare service.	<b>Number of pages and appendices</b> 50 + 12
<b>Supervisor</b> Suvi Kalela  <p>The objective of this thesis was to investigate how to brand a small company in an industry or sector that one could imagine quite unusual for branding. To narrow down the scope of the study, the specific topic was how to brand a small healthcare service. In addition, a suitable brand model was created for the case company AulisPalvelut and its service known as TerapiaLampola. Therefore the objective of the research was to create a brand model for the case company AulisPalvelut and especially to their new service called TerapiaLampola</p> <p>The thesis was conducted between fall 2011 and spring 2012. The theoretical framework of the research consists of branding, brand models, branding small businesses and branding healthcare. In mid-December a research was carried out and the results were used in order to test the functionality of the new brand model as well as define TerapiaLampola's existing brand.</p> <p>Observation and interviews were utilised in order to gather customers' perceptions about the TerapiaLampola brand. Based on the research data, the brand model for TerapiaLampola was improved to better reflect the brand. The data gathered was used for identifying the company's brand via the four pillars of the new brand model for TerapiaLampola: brand image, brand identity, brand performance and brand values.</p> <p>According to the research results, the brand model is applicable to TerapiaLampola. The perceptions the customers have about it were quite similar to what the company aimed for. In general, TerapiaLampola's brand model can be used in order to define a company's brand and to create a brand message for its use. Alternatively, the model can be used to compare if an existing brand meets with the customer perceptions.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> SME, brand models, branding small companies, healthcare branding, occupational therapy.	

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the thesis

In today's world branding is arousing more and more importance and interest. After all, every business has already got a brand – at least in the customers and potential customers minds (GREEN Communications 2006, 1). Therefore every company should consider themselves as a brand and take a moment to assess their brand so that it will reflect the customers' perception. Failing to meet up with customers' expectations will cause negative impact for the brand and to the business.

What makes branding interesting, is its versatility and the need to engage every department of a company to deliver the brand. Brand is not just the logo and appearance of a company or the perception customers have of it, but the entire promise that a company aims to give for its stakeholders (DeVries and McKeever 2008, 18). Therefore brand management involves everybody in an organization to deliver its message.

When talking about branding and brands, people have a habit of imagining big multinational brand's in their minds. Also many books and articles tend to use multinational brands or big local Finnish companies as examples. However, also small businesses are brands in their shareholders minds. In industries where the brand is more visible part of the company (e.g. trade or marketing), the companies have more knowhow about branding. On the contrary, small companies in other industries lack the ability and tools of branding despite that their businesses are considered as much brands as any small marketing company (at least in the consumers' minds).

Therefore the objective of this study is to investigate how to brand a small company of one to few people in an industry that is not that familiar with branding and to create a brand that such company can use. The case company of the study, AulisPalvelut, filled these criteria as it is a private small practice in the healthcare industry specialized into occupational therapy.

Personally, the objective of this thesis is very interesting as I have studied brand management prior to the making of this study. From my perception, the branding literature and cases that were used during the course were mainly about international famous brands and the brand models seemed also more suitable for them. Therefore this study gave me the opportunity to explore my knowledge and investigate the subject from a completely different point of view: to create a brand model for a small company.

## 1.2 Research question

The main research question is **how to create a brand model for a small healthcare service?** The focus is to create a brand model suitable for the case company, a small healthcare service based on occupational therapy.

What is a brand model? Model is defined as design of a product, a description of a system or an example to copy; meaning that it briefly explains how something works and/or an example of a system that can be copied by other people (Hornby et al 2005, 984). Therefore a brand model is a brief description of the branding process (branding is defined in chapter 2.1).

In the research I compare the different possibilities of branding a small health care service and combine the ones that are suitable for the SME in question and create a brand model that the company can use.

The biggest challenge is that there are quite few articles published about branding healthcare in the recent years. Therefore I had the opportunity to create a specific healthcare brand model from the beginning. Theory about branding, branding services, branding small companies and branding health care will be investigated and combined in order to create the brand model.

The keywords are about branding SME, brand models, healthcare branding and occupational therapy.

### **1.3 Introduction to the case company**

The case company in question is AulisPalvelut, an occupational therapy provider. Currently it is a sole trader and has one employee, the owner herself. After successful years in business, the company is launching a new kind of occupational therapy service called TerapiaLampola (The name is a combination of two separate words, therapy and a sheep barn). The core idea is to offer occupational healthcare service with the help of animals and the farm environment. This new method is based on AAT, animal assisted therapy.

The services TerapiaLampola offers are occupational therapy for individuals and small groups, lectures and visits for hospitals and educational institutions and lectures about AAT as a guest lecturer. The core idea is to do occupational therapy according to the patients' needs. Animals, animal related products or even the surrounding nature can be used in the therapy sessions according to the patient's own interest and the objectives of the rehabilitation process. (Laine 2008, 36-38.)

Using animals in the therapy is new in Finland and the company has aroused a lot of interest by educational institutions, hospitals and customers, even though the new business isn't even fully functional yet. It also participated into a study about Green Care- a concept that is trying to connect resources of the agriculture into activities concerning physical and mental health (Yli-Viikari & al. 2009, 4). Therefore the company has started to think among other things, how to answer to the growing need, how to market, what information to give and what is the future of the company. It is also thinking to improve marketing of the company, because currently information available about the company is quite poor (see appendixes 1 and 2). TerapiaLampola is registered trade mark and in operation under the trademark AulisPalvelut. The company is

also thinking whether to keep the two trademarks or if AulisPalvelut would merge with TerapiaLampola (so that the later would become the company's name). Creating a brand model and enhancing the TerapiaLampola's brand gives some structure to the company and aid on to communicate with current and potential clients and provides information for the company for both its internal and external use.

Currently, TerapiaLampola is starting its operations as the premises were completed recently. The company has already some clients and the current clients of AulisPalvelut are also eager to try TerapiaLampola's services. TerapiaLampola can also take more customers and be more flexible with the opening hours. As the premises are quite big, the company has the opportunity to hire another occupational therapist or take interns. At the moment TerapiaLampola service is under the company AulisPalvelut (registered as an assist trade name), but in 1-2 years the two companies are likely to merge under the name of TerapiaLampola. Also, as the idea of using sheep in occupational therapy is registered under TerapiaLampola, it is possible that in the future the company can sell the idea forward or educate others to use animals in the rehabilitation process.

#### **1.4 Structure of the study**

This study aims to research how a small healthcare service can be branded. In the beginning the case company will be presented and theory and research will be introduced briefly. As Ghauri and Grønhaug (2010, 17) express it, theory should precede observations. That is the structure of this study as well: Theoretical framework and research methodology will be presented first and they will be followed by the application of the theory, research findings and recommendations. The theoretical framework part focuses on presenting relevant theory about branding and the aspects that have to be taken into account when branding a small business in the healthcare industry. A brand model for TerapiaLampola was created according to the theory, so it is introduced in the end of the theory.



## 2 Branding

### 2.1 Brand Definition

To start investigating about branding, it is important first to identify what's a brand and what branding means. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines the brand as a “name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitor” (Keller, Apéria & Georgson 2008, 2). This definition does not cover all the aspects of a brand, in fact they are just some elements of a brand, as Keller et al (2008, 2) calls them. A study by GREEN communications (2006, 1) summarizes AMAs definition by claiming that brand can be an identification or a mark that differentiates business from another (through name or logo). However, brand is not just a trademark; it also symbolizes how people think about the company.

Branding is not just about the logo, differentiation and perceptions either. Gad (2001, 21) emphasizes that the main idea of branding is to add value to the customer (as that adds value to the company eventually) no matter if it is a product, service, company, person, event, art and so forth.

DeVries and McKeever (2008, 18) summarize this all into one sentence: “The Brand is the promise the organization makes to its audiences, both external and internal”.

Brands themselves are valuable intangible assets that need to be managed with care as they offer benefits to customers, employees and owners. The key importance of branding is that consumers perceive differences between brands in a product or service category. (Keller et al. 2008, 39.)

### 2.1.1 The Brand Code

The Brand Code invented by Thomas Gad (2001, 101) is a tool for defining the brand and to encapsulate the future positioning. It answers the question: What should the company really be about? The Brand Code should be precise and well-defined in order to make the brand understood by stakeholders. (Gad 2001, 101.)

The purpose of the brand code is to create a future-driven brand and the code is the main tool for that. The code is the core of the company and the most important instrument of decision-making. The secret of success of the biggest brands is that they take branding approach to everything in an everyday basis. (Gad 2001, 102.)

The actual Brand Code is a statement of a few words or a phrase describing what the brand really stands for, it is the story of the company, the business idea, the mission, vision and values all in one package. The spider-looking model has been built from six parts, present and future aspects, which Gad also calls backgrounds, and the synthesis of them is the main idea of the brand, The Brand Code. (Gad 2001, 102.)

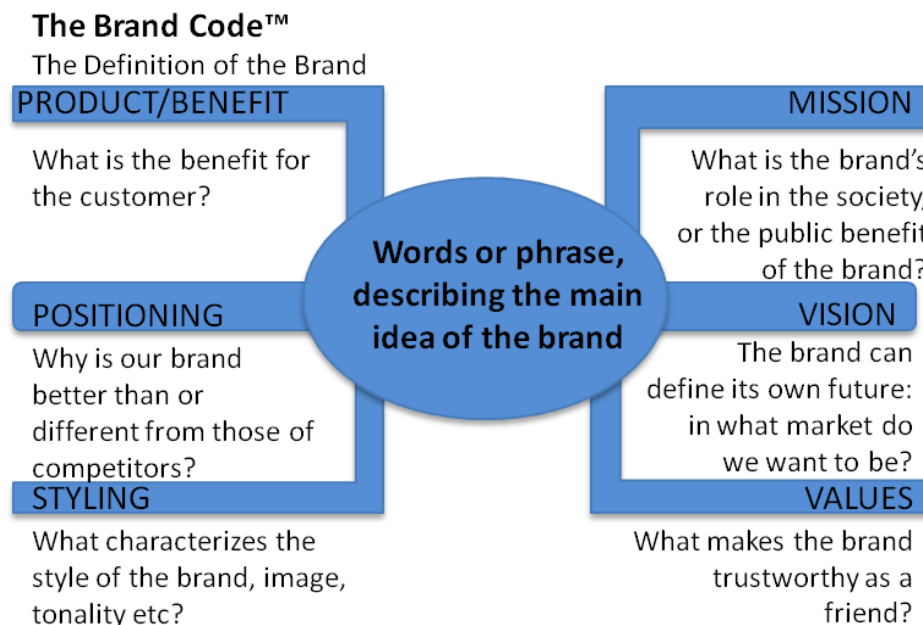


Figure 1. The Brand Code (Gad 2001, 102)

The present aspects or backgrounds are product/benefit, positioning and style. The future aspects consist of mission, vision and values. Product/benefit describes the offer the company presents to its customers and the benefits the customer experiences in whatever the company delivers (product, service, knowledge, expertise and so on). The positioning aspect defines why the company is better or different from its competitors. It is important to identify the capabilities that make the difference, which are most likely the competitive advantages of the company. The benefit and positioning aspects are related to the functional dimension in Gad's 4D branding model. (Gad 2001, 102-103.)

Styling describes the character or personality of the brand. It is the image, attitude, personal appearance and behaviour of the brand, no matter whether the brand is company, product or service. Styling is related to the social dimension in Gad's 4-D branding model. (Gad 2001, 103.)

For what would a company work for if it wasn't for money? Mission identifies that aspect in the brand definition process. Mission usually is the brand's role in the society or the public benefit of the brand. According to Gad (2001, 105), vision of a brand goes also beyond the more traditional idea of a company vision, as it states the positioning for the future and what offering they wish to provide.

Values are the rules of the company and emphasise the trustworthiness of a brand. They are the long-term personality of a brand as they guarantee continuity. However the words have to be chosen carefully and a company has to think if they truly stand behind them. As an example, to use words like honesty or ethical and not to live by them might be catastrophic when spreading to public. (Gad 2001, 105.)

After listing all the six different aspects, the brand code is created from them. It should be the thing that truly differentiates the brand from others. The brand code can be few different words (SAS brand code is simplicity, wellbeing and freedom of choice) or a phrase (like Nokia's "Connecting People") and it can be used internally, externally or in

both. This brand definition process helps also to identify the brands identity. (Gad 2001, 106.)

## **2.2 Brand identity**

Brand identity is a unique set of brand associations that the brand aspires to create and maintain. In other words, it indicates what the brand stands for and gives the consumer a promise by the organization. Even though the brand identity is the company's own brand identity, it should provide value also for the customer's benefit and through that create a relationship among them (Aaker 2010, 68).

Aaker suggests (2010, 78-79), that brand can be considered as from the following perspectives: brand as a product, brand as an organisation, brand as a person or brand as a symbol. All of the perspectives should be considered in the planning process and use the ones that are helpful in articulating what the brand should stand for in the customers mind. Both defining and identifying the brand identity can be implemented in the brand model.

A brand's identity should consist of core identity and extended identity. Core identity is the essence of the brand and that aspect of the identity that remains intact even over time. Extended identity in turn reflects those aspects of a brand's identity that may change over time and between different markets. (Aaker 2010, 68-69.)

## **2.3 Brand image**

As brand identity is the more aspirational level of how the brand wants the customers to perceive it, brand image is about how they actually perceive the brand (Aaker 2010, 69). Keller et al (2008, 80) define it quite similarly by claiming that the brand image is consumers' perceptions of a brand as reflected by the brand's association held in consumers' memories.

To avoid the brand image and brand identity to become as one, the brand image should always reflect the present perception of the brand while the brand identity reflects the aspirational goal of the brand (Aaker 2010, 69-70).

## **2.4 Brand equity**

According to Aaker (2010, 7-8) brand equity refers to a set of assets and liabilities that are linked to a brand's name and symbol, and that adds to or subtracts from the value provided by a product or service to a firm or its customers. In other words, brand equity shows what the value of the company is (in the eyes of the consumers) and where it comes from.

The brand assets are categorized into brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand associations. Each of those assets creates value in different ways and must be taken into account when making decisions about brand building.

According to Keller et al (2008, 80) brand equity is customer-based and therefore it is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on customer response when marketing the brand. When customers identify a brand, its brand equity is positive, as the customers react more favorably to a product or a service and the way it's been marketed. Brand knowledge refers to awareness and image the customers have and remember of a brand. Brand awareness in turn means depth (the probability that the brand can be recognized) and breadth (the variety of purchase/consumption situations in which the brand comes into mind) of a brand.

Keller et al (2008, 39) state that there are three main factors for building brand equity:

1. The initial choices for brand elements and identities that wake up the brand.
2. The way the brand is integrated into the supporting marketing campaign.

3. The associations indirectly transferred to the brand by linking the brand to some other entity (e.g. the company, country of origin, channel of distribution, or another brand).

## **2.5 Branding models**

There are many different ways to do branding and many authors have created a model of their own. Several different models were explored during this study in this thesis and the models in question were chosen as they represent different viewpoints to branding. Gad's 4D model focuses on the associations and relations that consumers create in their minds while Keller et al's brand equity pyramid is a more practical approach to show the building blocks of a brand (equity). Gad's Brand Code -model (2001) is also presented as it is a good model for a small company to identify the very basics of branding. Furthermore, there is a Brand Trust Model by Gelb (2011) in the branding healthcare -section, where branding is analysed from the point of view of the healthcare industry.

### **2.5.1 Gad's 4D model**

Thomas Gad's (2001, 94) four-dimensional model suggests that building a brand in the consumers mind always seems to fall into four different categories/ dimensions: spiritual, functional, social and mental. The results of these dimensions, the brand mind space, provide a basis for understanding the true nature and future potential of the brand. . This model is very thorough but as can be seen from the name, it focuses on the brand identity. When presented graphically, the Brand Mind Space shows what the strongest aspects of a brand are and where it needs improvement.

The first dimension is the functional dimension, which is the perceived benefit of the brand (product or service). It is not necessarily the real benefit the company has in mind but the one customer's experience. (Gad 2001, 93.) The product/benefit and positioning parts of Gad's Brand Code are part of the functional dimension. Gad

(2001, 95) warns that especially in the service sector the brand shouldn't rely too heavily on the functional dimension, as competitors can copy easily the service. Therefore a service brand should have a strong functional dimension but also improve the other dimensions (Gad 2001, 95).

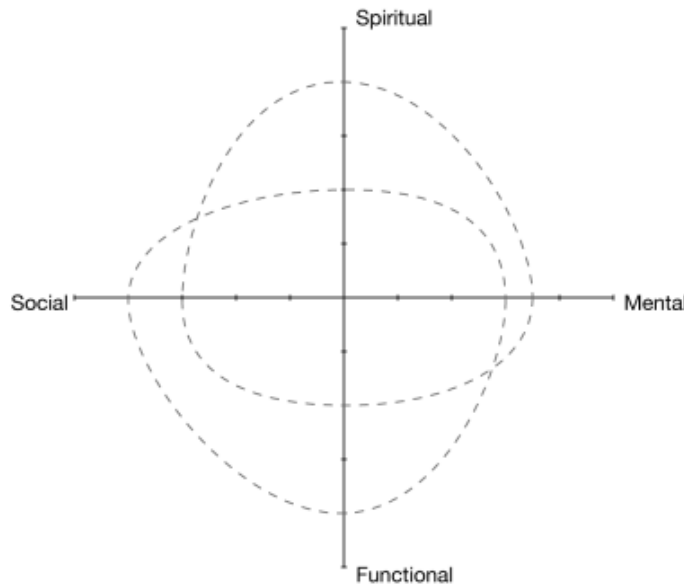


Figure 2. The Brand Mindspace: the four dimensions of a brand and how a brand locates between them (Marcbdesign.wordpress.com 2001)

As brand always creates an idea in the consumers mind, they also have a social identity. This is what the social dimension is about. Consumers make their decision based on how they feel about the product and what kind of product or service portrays their social identity the best (for example, a service can be exclusive, economic, and ecologic and so on). The highest social dimension is that the brand creates a society where people want to belong into (for example Apple), because people in general feel that they want to belong into a group. The social dimension can also reflect customers and a group of people they want to belong to, it is the ability of a brand to create identification with a group. (Gad 2001, 95.)

So as social dimension is what others think of an individual, the mental dimension is what that individual thinks of themselves. Therefore it's much more profound dimension than the social one, as it associates with a person's personality. The mental part of a brand is like a role model for a person's mind or behavior. It is something a person can identify from themselves or they aspire to be. Having something special gives a consumer (also in business customer) pleasure or a positive kick, and that aspect is very important in brand building. (Gad 2001, 96-97.)

The last dimension is the spiritual dimension. It is not religious at all, so it can be said to be more like an idealistic dimension. (Gad 2001, 98.) In Gad's model spiritual refers to a larger system that all the people are part of, it is the connection between the brand, the product or service and the bigger system, a perception of global or local responsibility. The ideology of the brand might be for example, improving health, ecology, ethics and so on, but normally it is a statement to change something into better, creating and ideology that can be believed in. (Gad 2001, 98.)

These four dimensions provide the basis for understanding the nature and future potential of the brand. The Brand Mind Space is a way to present the brand in the four areas. Like brands, every person and interest group of the brand has their individual brand mind space. As Gad (2001, 100) formulate it, a brand is not a chameleon, it cannot adapt to all of the interest groups but instead the aim is to create a well-defined, distinct brand.

The four dimensions and the brand code together create a framework for branding, that Gad (2001, 141) calls the Brand Envelope. It consists of the Brand Activity Generator (Brand code core message plus the four dimensions) with the six Brand Code inputs or aspects, as they are called in the Brand Code process. When creating, for example a new service business, first the brand code is from the six aspects is being created and from that basis the four dimensions are created. When adding something new to a business or to the service package, the brand is being changed too, so this can be



tried first by stretching the brand code according to the new ideas. However, pushing the brand code too far and not keeping in the original brand mind space might not work and it might destroy the brand. (Gad 2001, 141.)

### 2.5.2 Keller's brand equity model

Keller et al (2008, 56) presents brand equity pyramid that also shows stages of brand development and branding objectives at each stage. According to Keller et al's (2008, 80) customer based brand equity model, building a strong brand involves 4 stages of brand development (left in the figure), each stage involves its own building blocks (one level of the pyramid) and each stage has their own brand objective (right in the figure).

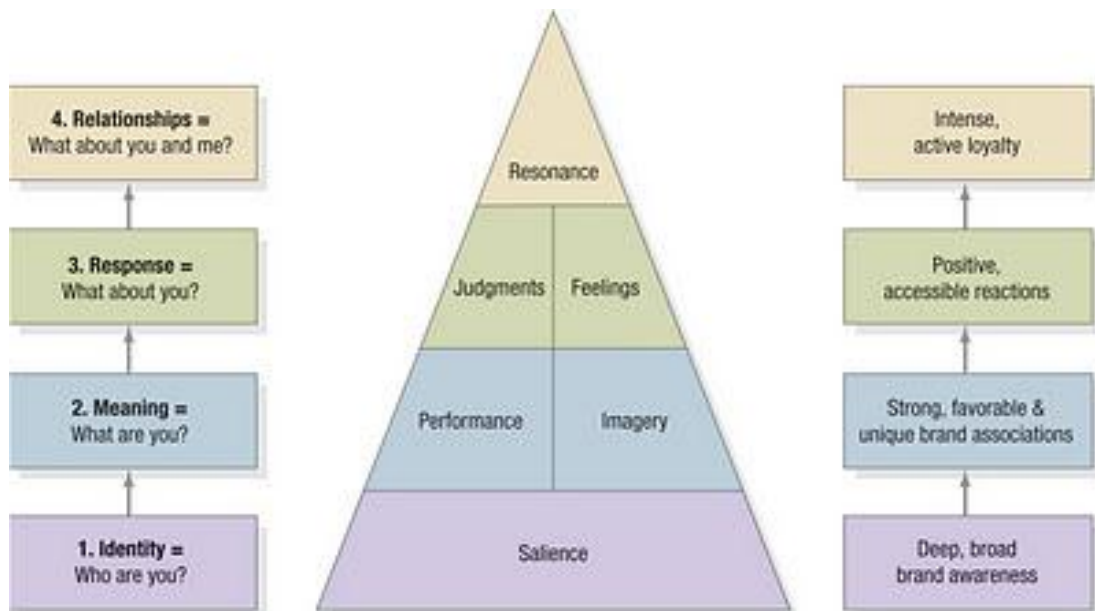


Figure 3. Keller's brand equity model (The FMCG & Retail Marketing Blog 2007)

The first stage is the brand identity. The goal of the first stage is to create deep, broad brand awareness (in customers' minds). This is done by identifying the brand with customers and associating the brand in customer's minds with a specific product class or customer need. (Keller et al 2008, 56.) The first block of the pyramid, salience, relates to building the brand identity. Brand salience is about brand awareness and the basic functions of the brand. The consumers need to understand what needs the brand is

meant to fulfil and into what category or part of a certain industry the brand belongs into. (Keller et al 2008, 59-61.)

The second stage is the brand meaning. It is done by establishing a brand meaning in the minds of customers by strategically linking a host of tangible and intangible brand associations with certain properties (Keller et al 2008, 56). Brand performance is about how the product or service aims to meet the customers more functional needs. It is the actual performance of a product or service plus other aspects that have an effect on to the customers' experience, such as product design, price, and customer service. Brand imagery is what people think of a brand abstractly, not what they think the brand actually does. The goal is to establish strong, favourable and unique brand associations. (Keller et al 2008, 63-66.)

The third stage, the brand responses, identifies what consumers think or feel about a brand. The objective is to provoke proper customer responses to its brand identification and brand meaning. Those customer responses should be positive, accessible reactions build with judgements and feelings. (Keller et al 2008, 67-69.)

Brand judgements are customers' personal opinions and evaluations of a brand. There are four main types of brand judgements: quality, credibility (brand expertise, trustworthiness and likeability), consideration (how relevant a brand is for the consumer) and superiority (being unique, better than others). Brand feelings relate to the emotional responses and the reactions that marketing evokes in the consumers. Also brand can be built to create a certain feeling in the consumer (such as warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval). (Keller et al 2008, 67-69.)

The final stage is the brand relationships where the brand response will be used to create an intense active loyalty relationship between customers and the brand. Brand resonance refers to that relationship and to the extent to which consumers feel they are in harmony with the brand. This can happen only if consumers are on sync first with the

other building blocks of the brand pyramid. Brand resonance consists of loyalty (how many times the product or service have been purchased), attachment (the attitude that brand is beyond good), community (social phenomenon where customer feels a connection with the brand) and engagement (customers willing to invest more resources (money, time, energy and so on) then required during the purchase of a product or consumption of a service. (Keller et al 2008, 70-72.)

## **2.6 Branding small businesses**

Small and medium sized companies can also create effective brands. How good a brand is, is not related to the size of a company, and complex branding models and strategies are not always the key to success. To start from the basics, a company must examine how the business works, what it means to its customers and act on from those results (GREEN Communications 2006, 1).

Why should small companies need to become brands? GREEN Communications (2006, 1) claim that every business has already got a brand – at least in the customers and potential customers minds. They already have an idea in their minds of what that company (brand) or the business means to them. Branding a small business means that the company communicates its message more effectively to the customers so that they associate the company better with their needs and requirements.

The brand is not just for the customers; good branding can take a small company to the next level. SMEs have to keep in mind is that a successful brand adds value to the business and attracts potential buyers, investors or franchisees. (GREEN communications 2006, 2.)

As small companies seldom have information available, apart from the basics: contact information and what the company does. Therefore it is important to assess the business first (GREEN communications 2006, 2):

1. Identify the core competences of the business. That is not necessarily what the company does but what it achieves for the customer.
2. Assess the existing and potential customers, who they are and what they want from the company.
3. Find out how customers feel about the business. These emotional responses can be transferred into brand values and they form the basis of the brand message.
4. Define how favorably the business is viewed by the customers and potential customers. This is the perceived quality of the business.
5. How far can the company develop its business with the current customer perceptions without moving away from the core competences? The amount the brands offer can be changed is the brand stretch.

This is also the current brand positioning of the company and it helps to start defining the brand identity and creating the brand. Brand identity comes mainly from the core competences and brand values. However, they must not conflict with the brand's existing reputation that the brand already has among the customers. The brand identity perceived by the company (including staff as well) cannot be completely different from the current and potential consumers either. (GREEN Communications 2006, 3.)

A company has to reflect its brand values into everything the current and potential customer can see and hear about the company. That means that the company literature has to reflect the brand value, so does the logo and company stationery, as those are immediate visual links to the brand. Also staff has to understand, communicate and believe in the brand values because their attitude and behavior will influence the success of the brand. All in all, every point of contact (advertisement, web page, phone call and so on) that a customer or potential customers has with the company has to reflect the brand values. If not, the brand will not be delivered right: the message the brand gives to the public might not be the one it aims to give. (GREEN Communications 2006, 3.)

What needs to be remembered is that the brand will not work instantly; it will develop strength over time. Therefore the brand needs to be managed constantly, not just after launching the brand. Staff needs to deliver the brand at all times, customers response to the brand should be monitored in a regular basis and the product or service given to the customers should be reviewed to make sure they back up the brand message. (GREEN Communications 2006, 4.)

As stated before, a successful brand can attract investors and franchises, but it also offers opportunities for the business to grow. However, the company has to keep in mind the brand stretch because stretching the brand too far can damage the brand. New product can also be branded separately or as a diffusion brand; that is a new brand from an existing brand. (GREEN Communications 2006, 4.)

## **2.7 Branding healthcare**

Not many books have been written about health care branding but some journals talk about it, as it seems that no matter what kind of business it is, branding is gaining more and more importance. When it comes to health care institutions, branding is the key element between business goals, employee behavior, marketing communication and the ability to deliver exceptional experiences; that is taking care of the patients with added value (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 15).

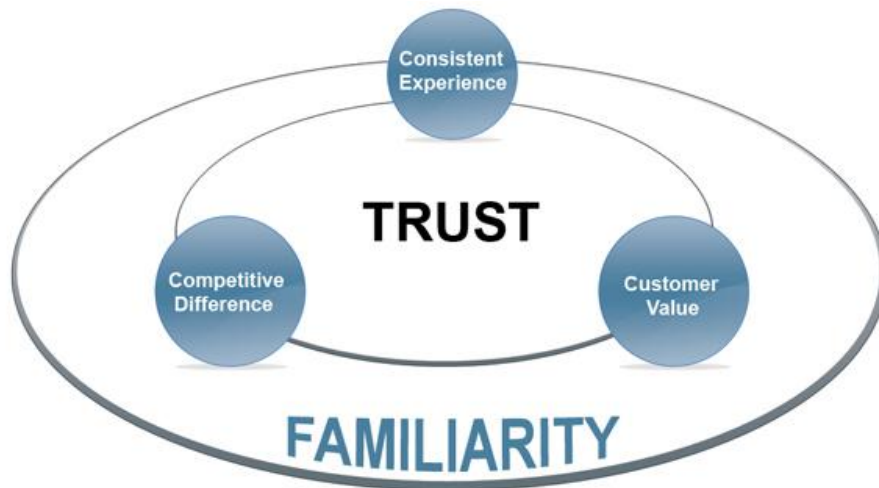


Figure 4. Gelb's brand trust model (Gelbconsulting 2011)

Health care industry is in a change: before people had the same doctor for years, maybe their entire life and doctors were trusted without criticism. Nowadays things are different as the internet offers plenty of information about diseases and treatments, the competition is getting more intense as more private practices are coming to the market, hospitals outsource and buy services from the private sector and people can travel far away to get the treatment they want. Therefore successful healthcare organisations are looking beyond the tradition; they are establishing a different way of thinking about the organization as a whole and increasing the role of marketing. (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 15-16.)

In general, businesses in the healthcare industry need to be trusted and the treatment has to be satisfactory and professional, but most healthcare companies want to go beyond that and provide extra value for the patient. As that is the nature of the industry, healthcare organizations tend to use Gelb's brand trust model, see figure 4. (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 17.)

Familiarity means that the company has been heard off (awareness) and somebody (friend, family, recommendation in a magazine or in internet) has used it (experience). Familiarity is linked with favourability, if someone has mentioned, they must have liked

the service (reputation, perceived quality, overall satisfaction). The inner circle consists of customer value (the benefit of high importance), competitive difference (reputation based on brand personality) and consistent experience (continuous customer satisfaction). These three aspects create the trust that the customers have for the company. (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 17.)

This model can be applied to bigger healthcare organizations as well as small local practices. In branding healthcare, experience is one of the key issues, no matter what is the size of the practice, because the greatest impact in healthcare comes through interactions between the staff and the patient, their family members and others. Therefore, for a healthcare brand (especially small practices) to endure, the brand must be easily understood, internalized and acted by the staff. (Grensing-Pophal 2011, 1.)

The staff in a small practice is in a key role in delivering the brand because they are the ones interacting with patients, their families and potential customers. If the employees do not understand the brand completely they might send mixed messages to customers that conflict with what the brand stands for. On the other hand, when employees understand the brand and that they are part of the process, they know they will be dealt with more respectfully and they are more likely to come along with the vision and even turn into brand ambassadors. (Grensing-Pophal 2011, 2-3.)

When talking about healthcare branding, it seems that the importance of employees cannot be emphasised enough. In healthcare, branding is an emotional connection between the practice and the people it serves. It is the experience the patients have with the healthcare service, the employees and the physical environment (hospital, office, private practice). Therefore the branding begins from inside outward as the brand has to be clearly understood, believed and delivered by the owners and the employees as much as by the current and potential customers. (Grensing-Pophal 2011, 2-3.)

In a small healthcare practice there are several aspects to take into account when implementing the brand. First, it is important to train the staff in the branding message; they need to understand the goals and why and how they are reached, as well as their role. Second, daily positive and helpful brand experience should be encouraged by recognising and encouraging positive behaviour. Branding should also be brought to hiring and to the organizational culture as it is important to hire and retain the right people who inspire a positive environment. Last, “do as I say but not like I do it” attitude is not working in a business where the employees are in the key position of brand success. Therefore implementing the brand should be demonstrated by leadership and show everyone to lead others in the process. (Hirsch & Gandolf 2011, 1.)

What if a doctor’s office looks messy and papers are lying around? Will the brand message be delivered to the patient when they walk to the office and expect reliable and efficient service? The facility has a message and the worst scenario is that it might have a negative impact on the brand. It might be good to consider the impact of the location, building appearance and office interiors to the brand image. (Hirsch & Gandolf 2011, 1.)

All in all, the increased branding in the healthcare sector has led to increased need of marketing, but branding goes beyond that. It is a new approach to the industry. Branding in a healthcare practice is the job of everyone and when done right, it is tied to mission, vision and goals, and to every action of the business, both externally and internally. (Stevenson 2006, 33, 45.)

## **2.8 Summary of the theory**

The models and guidelines above present different kinds of approaches towards branding. Keller et al ((2008, 56)) emphasize the importance of creating brand equity while Gad’s (2001, 94) alternatively introduces the idea of a brand mindspace. In turn, Gelb’s brand trust model (Gelbconsulting 2011) is more industry-specific while claiming that trust is the foundation of a healthcare organisations' brand. Even though the models in



question represent completely different viewpoints on branding, they share one common factor: the importance and need to define a company's brand.

This study focuses on building a brand model for a small healthcare practice, so what is the right way to continue the development of a brand model? Should it consist of clear building blocks that can be derived from a company's basic actions like Keller's model? Or should it be more conceptual like Gad's (2001) 4D model? Or perhaps focus on one theme like Gelb's (2011) model?

As the case company is small, the brand model should be simple but in the same time multifunctional. It should be quite self-explicatory but in the same time help the company to better understand their brand. Therefore the brand model should be more practical than conceptual.

Even though Gad's (2001) 4D Brand Model is interesting and presents a different kind of approach for branding, it might be too difficult to understand for people with no experience in branding. The 4D Brand model looks very simple but it is very conceptual. A small company requires a model, where they can clearly see the most important building blocks of their brand and the outcome of them.

The Brand Code model (Gad 2001, 102) is a tool defining a brand's core message from six different sources that can be found from a company. It is simple and down-to-earth and therefore serves as the base idea for the brand model under development. It is more a model for defining the brand prior actual brand, but it so uncomplicated that people of less understanding about branding can be able to use it. In contrast, Gelb's brand trust model (Gelbconsulting 2011) appears simple, but in order to fully understand it paragraphs of theory has to be studied first. Therefore The Brand Code (Gad 2001, 102) is the inspiration for the thesis: to create a model so simple that anyone can use it.

How can a small company create and maintain positive brand equity? What is the value of the company, where does it come from and how to maintain it? The healthcare branding articles emphasise trust, staff-patient relationship, professionalism, doing what you claim you do and keeping it clear and simple. However patients don't just want to trust to a company, they want experiences and added value for themselves (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 15-16).

At the same time TerapiaLampola should promote that its services are better than those of competitor's and that the service it provides is unique and offers exceptional experiences for the patients. How can a small company without marketing skills do all that?

That is why the company needs an easily understandable model that they can use and benefit from. The brand model should assist the company to map out the most important aspects of its brand and at the same provide additional value.

### **2.8.1 The Brand Model for TerapiaLampola**

Keeping in mind the objectives mentioned in the previous chapter, the brand model for TerapiaLampola is far simpler than Keller's brand equity pyramid and less conceptual than Gad's 4D model. The building blocks of the model are simple and possible for a small company to identify. Moreover, the model provides additional value for the company (or any other small practice for that matter) as the four building blocks help to create a brand message/slogan that reflects the brand.

The Brand Model below (figure 5) presents the key brand aspects for TerapiaLampola: The model is based on four building blocks: brand identity, brand image, brand values and brand performance. The aim is to identify the basic pillars of a brand and through that create a message that reflects the entire brand.

The core idea, that the model defines the brand and helps a company to create a brand message or a slogan, is derived from Gad's The Brand Code -model (2001, 102). Brand image, identity, performance and values have all been mentioned in the brand equity model (Keller et al 2008, 56). Also GREEN communications (2006, 2) mention those aspects in their checklist of branding for small companies.

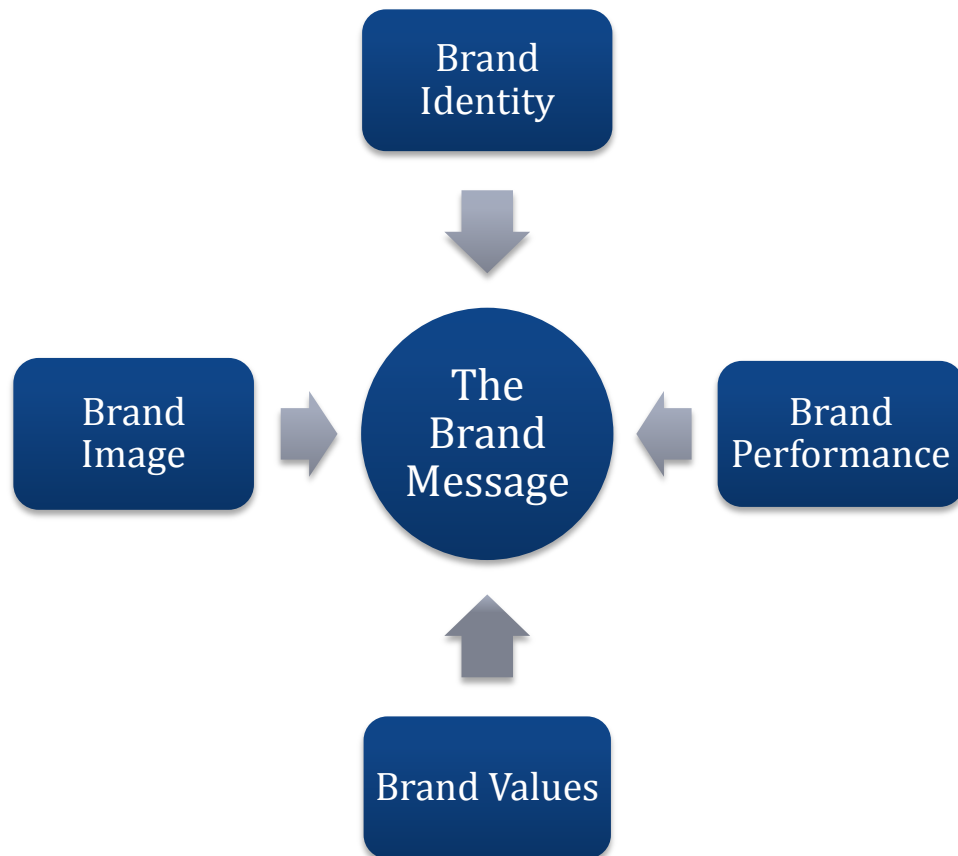


Figure 5. The brand model for TerapiaLampola (figure by the author)

In this model brand image has been derived directly from Keller's definition of brand image (2008. P. 80);" what is the consumer's idea of the brand? It is the basic idea of the brand and its reason of being." Customers should be able to perceive the company correctly because it increases the trust: they understand what the company does and don't feel that they get the right therapy for their needs. Brand image is also part of

Keller's Brand equity model (Keller et al 2008, 67-69) in which it is described as salience.

Brand identity then is what the brand really is about. What it wants to achieve for itself as well as for the customers and patients. It is the reason behind why the company does what it does. This reasoning should also be done well so that the customer understands that the company wants to work for the customer's best. For a small company, image and identity can be derived from the company's mission and vision (as mission is what the company at this moment is doing and vision is the bigger reason for doing it or the aspirational level a company wants to reach in the future). According to GREEN Communications (2006, 3), brand identity can be derived mainly from the core competences (brand performance) and brand values.

Brand values stand for what is important for the brand. They should be also respected by its customers, because finding a common ground with the customer and appreciating the same values increase the trust patients and other clients (hospitals, insurance companies etc.) feel for the company (DeVries & McKeever 2008, 17). In other words, it is important to find out what customers feel about the business and those emotional responses can be transferred into brand values (GREEN Communications 2006, 3).

Brand performance is about a company's ability to deliver its service to the customer. Keller et al. (2008, 67-69) mention brand performance as part of the brand equity pyramid by stating that delivering a service includes fulfilling the brand promise that was given along with it. Brand promise consists of all the aspects that the brand stands for. GREEN Communications (2006, 3) has incorporated brand performance and brand promise by defining brand performance as the core competences of the business, i.e., that might not be exactly what the company does but what it achieves for the customer.

Does the customer experience reflect the brand image, identity and values? If the customer thinks that the company performed below his expectations, this has a negative impact for the company and will create distrust. In turn, if the performance was satisfactory or exceeded expectations it will have a positive impact on brand equity.

These four aspects together create the pillars of the brand of a small company such as TerapiaLampola. As stated earlier, in the healthcare sector and especially in small practices, the employee-patient relationship is highly important, and the link that makes a customer to trust and like the company. It is crucial that clients and patients trust to the company's services and that what the company offers, promises and stands for reflect to the outcome of the service provided.

When creating a brand, it is important to remember brand stretch (GREEN Communications 2006, 3). How much can a company change their offering, image or brand promise without causing damage to the brand? That is why companies should consider brand stretch when they are designing the brand of the company. When the damage occurs, also the customers trust the brand less than before and that also results as negative impact on the brand's equity. The company has to think that when it changes one or some of the aspects in the brand model, how much can be changed i.e. how much can an item be stretched without it causing damage for the brand?

As the process of branding should be made simple for a small company, this model aims for the same. These four aspects can be derived from a company (e.g. their business plan, company's experience, operations and customer feedback) and then improved further: brand image from customer's perceptions about the company, brand identity from mission and vision, brand values from the company's own values and brand performance from the company's core services. The brand message created can be used as a slogan of the company for both internal and external use.

### **3 Research methods**

This part of the thesis focuses in gathering primary data. According to Ghauri & Grønhaug (2008, 90), primary data is the original data collected by a person for his/her research problem. In essence, this chapter presents the research methods chosen for gathering primary data as well as the results of the data collection process.

#### **3.1 Data collection**

Observation and interviews based on questionnaires were used for the data collection process. In fact, there are three different methods for collecting primary data sources: personal experiment, observations and communication (surveys, interviews) (Ghauri & Grønhaug 2008, 99). Personal experiment was not used as means of collecting primary data as it would not have served the purpose of this study. Due to the researcher's knowledge about the company, the results of a personal experiment would have been highly biased and it would have had damaged the reliability of the research.

Instead, observation and questionnaire-based interviews were used in order to gather data from a group of people. TerapiaLampola held a launch event for clients and potential ones. The launch event in question gave the researcher an opportunity to not just communicate with the attendants but also to observe their reactions towards the company and above all, the brand of TerapiaLampola.

As the time for the launch event was limited, having in depth interviews with the participants would have been quite impossible. Instead, the event was being observed by the researcher and a questionnaire with open-ended questions was given to the participants. In fact, the methods chosen turned out to be very applicable for the event as a lot of data was gathered for the research.

### **3.1.1 Observation**

The launch event of TerapiaLampola was observed by the researcher. The inauguration took place in a Friday afternoon, 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2011, from 2-4 p.m. Approximately 10 people were expected to be present in the event as the owner of TerapiaLampola had invited some clients and potential ones to get to know to the new service better. The participants consisted mainly from healthcare professionals working in governmental institutes or private hospitals.

Observation was chosen as one of the methods for gathering primary data because of its convenience. Likewise, Ghauri and Grønhaug (2008, 99) agree that it is a good way to gather information about the reactions and responses of a group of people. Observing a social event, such as the inauguration of TerapiaLampola, gives more space for the participants to discuss and come up with more opinions and ideas on their own.

It was expected that the participants would communicate with each other during the event, comment and ask questions from the owner and have discussions. What made the observation more interesting was to find out what kind of feelings and opinions the participants have towards the company and could those concerns and doubts be turned into positive thoughts and perceptions.

The observation method chosen for this research is what Saunders et al. (2007, 288) describe as observer as participant. It implies that both the other participants will know the purpose of the researcher (to observe the discussion in order to collect data for the thesis) and that the researcher will principally observe the event and secondarily participate into the situation observed.

A good observation should also have some structure in the observation. Saunders et al (2007, 294) presented some evaluation forms in order to record the participant's behavior. As the purpose of this observation is not to evaluate each participant but the outcome and content of the discussion, highly structured observation method is not

necessary nor very realistic (I cannot decide the order in which matters will be discussed). However, an observation without any planning wouldn't really serve the purpose of the study either (as the observer might focus on into more irrelevant issues). Therefore some preparation will be needed. I contacted the company prior to the launch event to ask what is the schedule and what kind of topics or issues will be presented and what the company wants to discuss in the event. I made a rough schedule along with the topics, so that during the observation it would be easy to follow up and know what to expect next.

For data collection purposes, a list was made from the participants (see table 1 below). Names are not mentioned in the list in order to protect the privacy of the participants. Instead, their occupations are mentioned and each participant had been given a symbol (a letter from A to P). Person A is the owner and the rest are the participants. The observer is not in the list and therefore will be mentioned as "the observer" in chapter 3.4.

Some of the people were more active (asking questions and giving comments/feedback) in taking part into the discussion while others remained more passive (silent or just agreeing. The level of participation has been included to the other remarks -column in the table below. Officially, the inauguration was from 2-4 p.m. Since some of the people arrived late while others left early, the presence- column in the table below illustrates the time each participant was present in the event



**Table 1. The list of participants**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Institution/ Organization</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Presence</b>
A	Toimintaterapeutti	TerapiaLampola	Active	2-4
B	Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija	Metropolia	Active	2-4
C	Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija	Metropolia	Active	2-4
D	Toimittaja	Etelä-Hämeen Lehti	Active	2-3
E	Yritysneuvoja	ProAgria	Active	2-3:30
F	Yritysneuvoja	ProAgria	Active	2-3:30
G	Toimintaterapeutti	RMK:n tk:n ky	Active	2:15-3:30
H	Lääkäri	RMK:n tk:n ky	Active	2:30-4
I	Lääkäri	RMK:n tk:n ky	Passive	2:30-4
J	Sosiaalityöntekijä	RMK:n tk:n ky	Quite active	2:15-3:30
K	Psykologi	Perheneuvola	Quite active	2:15-4
L	Puheterapeutti	Perheneuvola	Quite active	2:15-4
M	Terveystenhoitaja	Neuvola	Quite passive	2:15-4
N	Lähihoitajaopiskelija	Neuvola	Passive	2:15-4
O	Toimintaterapeutti	Janakkala tk	Quite passive	2:30-4
P	Rakennusmestari	Hyria	Passive	2-3

### **3.1.2 Interviews and questionnaire design**

I brief questionnaire was chosen because it is the most convenient solution for gathering data that might not come across in the observation. Therefore the questions were designed according to the brand model in order to identify the most important aspects of the company and test the functionality of the model. The owner had previously used the slogan Occupational Therapy in the Farm Environment (“Toimintaterapiaa Maati-

laympäristössä” in Finnish) in some presentations and advertisement. As it seemed to be quite fitting for the company, I decided to use it as the brand message.

Questionnaires are a good tool for data gathering as they provide an efficient way to gather information from a large group of people (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 355). The biggest pitfall of this method is that, a questionnaire has to be designed with care because the researcher has only one opportunity to gather the information she needs. Therefore the questionnaire has to be able to collect the necessary data in order to answer to the research questions and objects. (Saunders et al. 2007, 355.) In addition, the language of the questionnaire has to be taken into account. It is essential that the wording and order of the questions have been thought of in order to avoid any kind of confusion and doubt in the respondents (Saunders et al. 2007, 394). It might cause some reliability and validity issues if the respondents leave some questions unanswered and answer incorrectly into others. Adams et al. (2010, 132) agree on this matter stating that the respondent will not understand the intention of the study if the questions of a survey are unclear.

While designing the questionnaire, it was assumed that the launch event itself and the semi-free discussion in the event focuses more on the professional topics, such as therapy methods, clients and the diseases and injuries that can be treated in TerapiaLampola. Therefore the questions in the questionnaire focus more on the branding aspect of the company. As the intention is to gather opinions of the respondents, open-ended questions will be asked in the survey. Closed questions (require normally a simple yes/no answer) could have caused bias towards the study as they do not allow the respondents to give their own response/opinion to a question while open-ended questions allow freedom of expression and more in-depth answers from the respondents. (Adams et al 2010, 132.)

Some of the most important factors that had to be kept in mind when designing the questionnaire were language and time. It was important to use understandable language

in the questionnaires because it was targeted to healthcare professionals, not business-people. If terms such as brand image, brand identity or brand values would have been used in the questionnaires, it might have caused confusion among the respondents. It was also essential to make the questionnaire brief so that as many people in the event as possible could have time to answer into it. The launch event was scheduled to endure two hours and most of the participants had to head back to their work after the event. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants of the inauguration in the end of the event after the official presentations had ended.

Like in the observation, in the interview the participants remained anonymous. Each filled survey was given a number and the answers were gathered and grouped according to the questions (so that the number of each answer presents the questionnaire of which it is from). Table one below presents the interviewees according to their code number and occupation and/or the organization they represent. Some of the interviewees wanted to respond together to the questions because their “responses would be similar anyway” (as interviewee 4 expressed it).

**Table 2. Table of the interviewees**

Interviewee	Occupation
1	Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija /Metropolia Amk
2	Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija /Metropolia Amk
3	Proagria
4	Proagria (2 henkilöä kirjoittivat yhdessä)
5	Toimittaja
6	Puheterapeutti, Riihimäen Terveyskeskus
7	Toimintaterapeutti, Riihimäen Terveyskeskus
8	Sostt, Perheneuvola (4 henkilöä samasta paikasta, täyttivät yhdessä)

A few questions were asked related to each of the four factors/ pillars of TerapiaLampola's brand model. The respondents were also asked to give their occupation and which company or organization they represented as well as how they had heard about the company in the first place. The questionnaire is located in appendix 4.

Brand image (questions 2,3 and 4), questions about first impressions of TerapiaLampola: What first aroused your attention when you heard about TerapiaLampola? What positive and good aspects TerapiaLampola has? What comes into your mind when you hear the words TerapiaLampola?

Brand identity (questions 8, 9 and 10), objectives of the company itself as well as for the customers/patient perspective: What kinds of patients you think benefit the most from this kind of therapy? What kind patients will actually like it the most? What do you think the patients will think about TerapiaLampola?

Brand Values (questions 5 and 6), the deeper meaning of TerapiaLampola's existence: Why do you think that the company is important? What does TerapiaLampola do for the patient?

Brand performance (questions 3 and 7), analyzing the core services of the company: How does the company help or improve the customers (=patients) rehabilitation process? Into what functions and what kind of rehabilitation/therapy TerapiaLampola suits the best?

In chapter four, the brand model is applied to the case company according to the research findings of the survey and observation. That way the findings are used to identify the four pillars of the model and if the existing brand message reflects the perceptions of the customers/ respondents of the survey and observation.

### **3.2 Reliability and Validity**

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thompson (2007, 319-320), “reliability is the extent to which data collection technique or techniques will yield consistent findings and the transparency in how sense was made from the raw data.” In other words, could the research be repeated and similar observations or conclusions made by other researchers. Naturally, a research cannot always be repeated due to circumstances, so therefore the researcher has to clearly justify their results or reason the conclusions. (Saunders, Lewis & Thompson 2007, 319-320.)

As the observation of the launch event is impossible to repeat, I collected data from it as objectively as possible and presented also aspects that might not be that favourable towards the company or to this study. I also intended to reason and provide an explanation or a source to any opinion or statement mentioned in the study. To improve the reliability of the observation, a list of all the participants was created for reference (in chapter 3.1.1). Whenever an opinion is mentioned in the research findings, it is backed up with the symbol of the person or people who expressed the opinion (e.g. person A stated or participants B, J and K believe that).

To enhance transparency of the interviews, the findings of the questionnaires are located in appendix 4 and each filled questionnaire has been given a reference number. The answers of the respondents have been copied there word for word from the original survey sheets. Therefore anyone who reads this study can overtly compare the findings based on the interviews (chapter 3.5) with the results of the questionnaires.

Validity relates to the data collection methods and to the research findings. In data collection methods validity is the extent to which the methods accurately measure what they were intended to measure. Similarly, the validity of research findings refers to the extent they are really what they claim to be. The two aspects of validity are tightly related into each other because if there are doubts that the data collection methods don't

measure what they claim to be measuring, then also the research findings become questionable. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 614.)

In essence, the research methods and results should be accurate and meet the objectives of the study. The study has been made as transparent as possible so that the reader can check the sources used and compare their compatibility with the findings. The conclusions can be compared with the objectives of the introduction in order to confirm whether the study met the objectives or not. It is also up to the reader to utilize critical thinking and analyse by themselves the validity of the research.

However, the published thesis (located in the library of Haaga-Helia's Pasila campus) includes the assessment by the commissioning party, so that anyone can compare the assessment with the thesis for a cross-check.

### **3.3 Findings based on observation**

The researcher had the opportunity to observe the launch event TerapiaLampola that took place Friday 16.12.2011. The owner hoped that 10 people would come to the event, but she was surprised as approximately 20 people come to get to know to the premises of TerapiaLampola. These people consisted of healthcare professionals from hospitals, therapy clinics, educational and governmental institutes. They are the very people who either decide or recommend therapy methods for patients or finance local small businesses. There was also a local news reporter visiting the premises of TerapiaLampola and later next week she published her article in a local regional newspaper (see appendix 5).

First, two occupational therapist students (participants B and C) presented their thesis based on farm as an occupational therapy environment. The purpose of their thesis was to identify what occupational kinds of therapy interventions can be performed in the farm environment along with the opportunities and limitations of the environment. In a nutshell, they came to the conclusion that a farm environment creates a diverse

and open environment for occupational therapy. As it offers a lot more stimuli it may allow more possibilities in a therapy session or be a barrier for those who are not ready for it. (Saukko and Warsell 2011, 35). The results of the thesis were included into the observation, because they were thoroughly discussed in the event (mainly between participants A-D and G-O).

All in all, the participants were really interested about the company (participants B-O); they asked a lot of questions from the owner and presented their own ideas about the company's functions. There was a continuous professional discussion going on about the company, therapy methods, treatment progresses and the following key observations were made.

First, all of the participants agreed the TerapiaLampola's business idea is good and optimal for occupational therapy (Participants B-O) and they clearly want to use it in the healing process (participants G-I) or want to recommend it (participants J-M). The feedback the owner received was only positive. A journalist (participant D) asked about studies or sources related to animal assisted therapy. What was surprising that the healthcare professionals (participants G-I and L) themselves recalled reading various articles and researches related to using animals and nature in different kinds of therapies.

Second, the participants (B-O) agreed that occupational therapy in TerapiaLampola has positive effects on the recovery of a patient. The patients have more variety of therapy methods to choose from (participants B, C, G, H), TerapiaLampola's premises offer more real-life environment than hospitals (participants B, C, E, F) and both of these factors enable patients to recover/heal faster (participants B,C, G-I, K,L and O).

Third, the variety of methods that can be used in TerapiaLampola apply for all the different kinds of patients (participants B-O). The people came up with many ideas and forms of occupational therapy that can be used of in the premises. The two occupa-

tional health therapy students (participants B and C) suggested that this form of therapy could be especially good for men as they tend to find the more traditional forms of therapy quite boring. This concept was also welcomed by the other healthcare professionals who said this could be promoted forward to their male clients as “Äijäterapia” (therapy for men). That was only one example because the participants couldn’t really name any specific group that could not benefit from the company’s occupational therapy services (B-C, E-L).

The only matter that aroused more concerning questions was about the safety of the clients when working with animals (participants D-F, J, L and M). An open discussion followed this matter and the people came in unison to following outcome: The animals chosen for the animal assisted therapy have especially tender nature (participants B, C, E-H) and can be easily approached even by people who are not so familiar with animals (B-O). Second, the people trusted the owner to know how to deal with the animals because of her skills and experience (B-O). Some of the doctors (H and I) even suggested that she could train occupational therapists to use animal assisted therapy.

### **3.4 Findings based on interviews**

The observation was followed by handing the questionnaires in the end of the event. This was the best timing as before that there was specific program and a more medical discussion about the treatments and therapeutic possibilities of TerapiaLampola. Some of the people had to rush back to their own work, so they didn’t have the time to answer to the questionnaire. Some people who came from the same institution decided to answer together to the questionnaire (according to them their viewpoints on the company are similar). The people who answered to the questionnaires presented quite well all the people who participated to the event as their occupations were among others: therapists, occupational therapy students, social security workers and financiers of small business ventures (a government-found institution).



Survey questions were translated into Finnish for the purpose of that all the respondents were able to give the right answers for all the questions. Each filled survey was given a number and the answers were gathered and grouped according to the questions so that the number of each answer presents the questionnaire of which it is from. The survey questions in Finnish along with the comprehensive answers are located in appendix 4. Altogether 8 questionnaires were filled and 12 people answered to the surveys, which is more than half of the people who participated to the event.

Most people had either heard about the company or the owner through work related matters (respondents 3, 4, 5 and 7) or straight from the owner herself (1, 2, 6 and 8). As many people said during the observation (respondents G-K), the professional circles are quite small in the area, so even if everyone doesn't know everyone, then news travel fast. The innovativeness of the company (respondents 3, 4, 5), the new form of therapy by bringing animals into therapy process (respondents 1, 2, 4 and 6) and the new opportunities that the company can give (respondents 7 and 8) were the main reasons that aroused the respondents' interest towards the company.

Below, the results of the interviews are grouped according to the four pillars of the brand model for TerapiaLampola.

### **Brand image**

The positive responses that the company arouses consist of animals and the use of animals in the therapy and the animal/farm environment (respondents 3, 5, 6). Innovativeness was also mentioned as well as making use of the country side in the business (respondents 1, 2, 4, 7, 8). The two most popular words that came into the respondents mind from the company's name, TerapiaLampola, were naturally sheep and therapy (respondents 1, 5, 7 and 8). Other similar words were mentioned such as rehabilitation, using/ combining animals in the therapy, a professional approach, the idyll (respondents 3, 4 and 6). One person (respondent 2) also commented that it is a name that makes you think what it contains.

### **Brand identity**

The respondents think that TerapiaLampola services benefit all kinds of patients and as one of them stated (respondent 4), the customers that won't benefit from it are the ones who get anxious from the nature and animals. Some special groups that were mentioned were children (respondents 2 and 8), men (2), customers suffering psychiatric diseases (2,3) and mute patients (2), practicing emotional or social skills (1), rotation of hand (3).

To narrow this down the respondents were asked that what kind of patients would actually like TerapiaLampola the most. Even though all of the age groups were mentioned (children, teenagers, adults, the elderly), the connecting factor seemed to be nature, animals, people who like nature and/or animals (respondents 1, 2, 3). Also it was stated that the people who don't have that much experience from the farm environment (respondent 7) and the patients that are hard to motivate in the "traditional therapy situations" (4) benefit the most from TerapiaLampola's services.

When asking the patients response towards TerapiaLampola, most respondents believed that they will react positively and that their experiences will be positive as well (respondents 1, 3, 5, 7). Patients are also believed to consider it as fun, interesting, calm and diverse (respondent 2); it may encourage the more sensitive patients while calm the more restless ones (8). In the beginning the therapy may arouse some wonderment and questions, but later will be a motivating environment (4).

### **Brand Values**

When asking from the respondents why the company is important, the answers were diverse but strongly linked to innovativeness. According to some answers, the company is forerunner/pioneer in utilizing alternative therapy environment and forms of therapy (respondents 1 and 4), it is new, exceptional, down-to-earth (5) and it offers an alternative solution when comparing the "traditional" occupational therapy (7). Note,

when observing the event, the participants mentioned (participants B, C, G, H) traditional therapy as therapy in an occupational therapists office, normally in the hospital. Therefore TerapiaLampola is important for such customers who don't find therapy in a hospital environment meaningful (respondent 2).

What TerapiaLampola does for the patient is that it offers a diverse therapy environment /many different alternatives for the patient (respondents 1 and 2). The message was similar in almost all of the respondents' answers. According to them, it also offers a therapeutic environment for the patient (5) or an environment that is easily accessible but in the same time challenging (6). It offers a challenging and down-to-earth environment and that the patients can learn from the environment and from themselves (7). Other respondent also stated that the company offers a motivating rehabilitation environment (4) and that the nature has a healing impact for both patient's performance and psyche (3).

### **Brand performance**

How does the company help or improve the customers (=patients) rehabilitation process? As one of the respondents (respondent 6) stated in her answer, life has to have meaning. The other respondents taught that the rehabilitation process has to have additional value too. Once again the environment aspect was mentioned (2, 4, 7) but other reasons came across as well. TerapiaLampola enables the customer to have the opportunity to implement meaningful activities (1), it offers professional rehabilitation in a stimulating and diverse environment (2) and the company itself is impressive in the rehabilitation/therapy (3).

The therapy functions to which the company suits the best are many as well. All in all the respondents mentioned many different target groups and in general that the company is suitable for many kind of therapies (such as physiotherapy, rehabilitation for mental illnesses) (respondents 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8) and different forms of occupational therapy (1, 3, 6).

All in all, the results of the observation and interviews are enough to plan the four pillars of the brand model for TerapiaLampola. The model is presented in the next chapter.

### **3.5 Conclusions**

According to the research findings, TerapiaLampola had already become a brand (at least in the respondents' minds). In fact, it had already raised some brand awareness and recognition as it was already known before it even had held the official opening. The people clearly had some images about the company as they kept asking questions in the launch event. According to the observation, the participants had a positive reaction towards the company and the new form of occupational therapy was welcomed with enthusiasm.

#### **3.5.1 TerapiaLampola's new brand model**

It appears that the brand model can be applied to TerapiaLampola. The brand message, Occupational Therapy in the Farm Environment, supports brand image, identity, values and performance. The model has been modified into TerapiaLampola's use below and explained further in the following chapters.

The idea of the brand model has remained the same but few applications were made to better adjust it for TerapiaLampola's needs. The model has been modified so that instead of listing ideas under each part of the model, the model actually tells a story of the company. Therefore the order of the four pillars is different: above the center is brand image followed by (in clockwise order) brand identity, performance and values. As the company supports green values, the model was made green as well to better reflect the company.

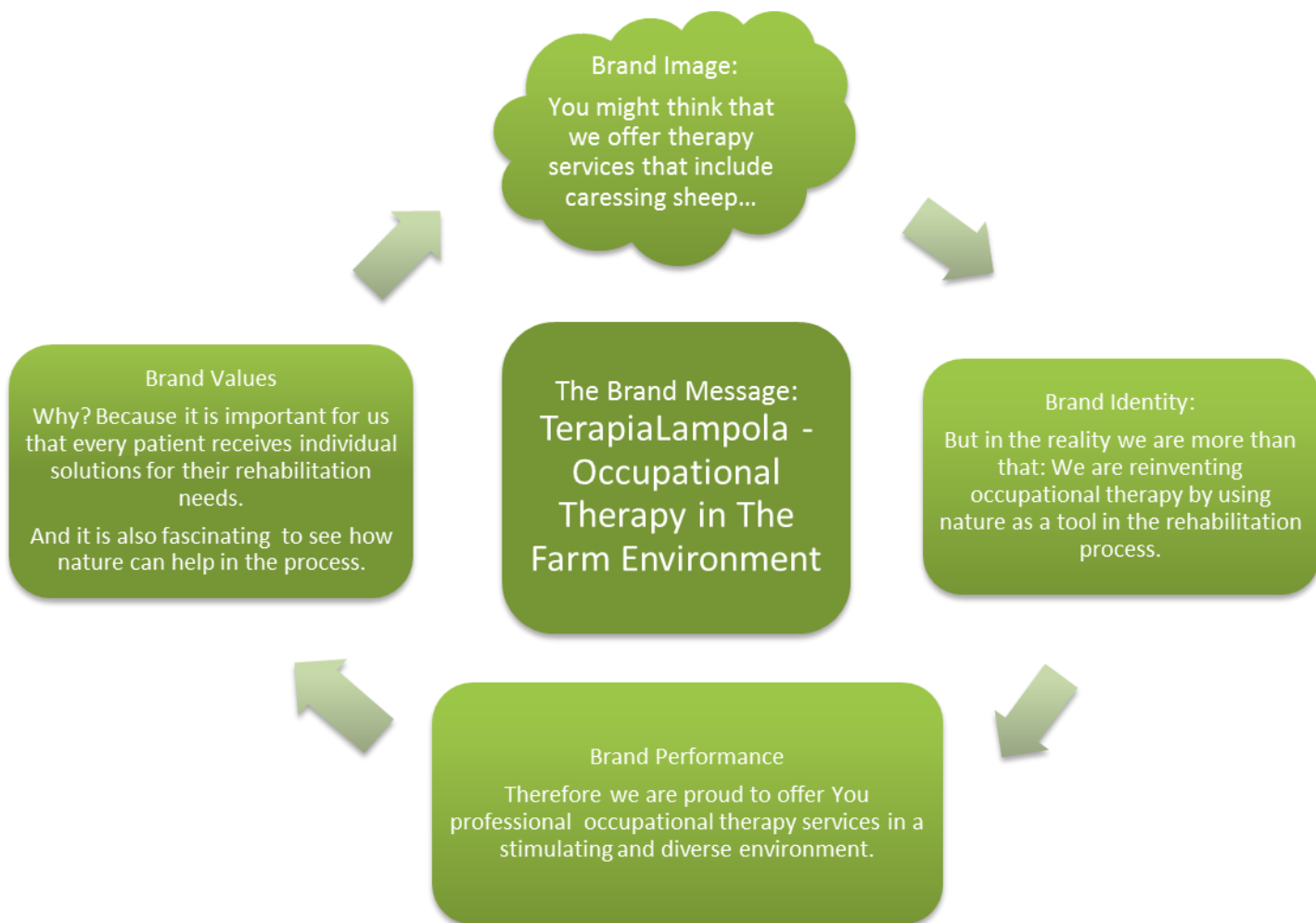


Figure 6. TerapiaLampola's new brand model

### Brand identity and image

The brand image consists of therapy, sheep and innovativeness. Those are the concepts that came into respondents' minds the most and also describe the company the best. Other similar concepts could be animals instead of sheep or therapy with sheep/animals. Innovativeness was also chosen because the name arouses questions and interest because its newness and unfamiliarity (as the concept is new and not known before).

The brand identity is about the innovativeness of the company and breaking the borders of traditional occupational therapy. It is not exactly a new therapy form (and from a professional point of view it is not correct to say so). From a customer's point of view it offers new opportunities and makes therapy also more fun and in the same time

more reasonable. Therefore the brand identity could be therapy with a reason, therapy that matters or therapy in a real-life environment. Even an image such as therapy from the nature or reinventing the methods of occupational therapy, reflects the innovativeness and breaking the borders.

### **Brand Values**

Innovativeness is a strong point of difference in TerapiaLampola's brand values. Phrases such as down-to-earth, the importance of environment and alternative solutions for the traditional occupational therapy describe the values of the company. After all, the core idea behind the company is to combine the farm environment with occupational therapy and offer new therapeutic tools for the patients. Therefore the brand values are: Offer the patient the therapy that suits their needs the best, combining the nature and occupational therapy into a solution that benefits the patient the best and (when working with the patient) to offer individual solutions for each patient in the farm environment. The core value is to offer something different but as efficient (or even more) than the traditional occupational therapy and in the same time use the environment as a tool for the therapy.

### **Brand Performance**

The Brand Performance is about TerapiaLampola's part or role in a patient's rehabilitation process and fulfilling the customer's need for occupational therapy. Customer in this context means the doctor, hospital or an insurance company that sends the patient to TerapiaLampola but as well the patient who receives the therapy.

The environment is an important factor in TerapiaLampola's performance as well as the possibilities for the patients to use the tools they like the best in the rehabilitation process. It has to be remembered also that TerapiaLampola is not a new alternative therapy method invented by an amateur, but a new way to do occupational therapy done and approved by trained health care professionals. Therefore the brand performance

of TerapiaLampola is “professional rehabilitation in a stimulating and diverse environment” (as one of the participants of the survey put it).

### **3.6 Recommendations for TerapiaLampola**

I think that the current brand message, Occupational Therapy in the Farm Environment, is good for the company and reflects the essence of the company. Even though sheep are mentioned in the company’s name, the brand message communicates the true idea of the company; offering occupational services in the farm environment (not necessarily with animals).

There is a minor gap of perception, as the name makes the customer to think about sheep while the core idea is more in the environment in general. I don’t recommend the company to change its name because the current name has already created some recognition and is, in fact, quite memorable. Instead, TerapiaLampola should implement the message into any interaction with a customer. Apart from advertisements, it should place the message under the company name in advertisement and in any documents (letters, emails, bills etc.) that go outside from the company. It is important that in any action with the client or a potential one, the message will be communicated.

In the future, TerapiaLampola should re-evaluate from time to time its brand image, brand identity, brand values and brand performance along with the brand message in order to make sure they are up-to-date and in unison with each other. Similar follow-ups should be made every time when something changes in the company (for example, if the company expands the variety of therapy methods/ animals used or hires new staff).

Such changes should also be evaluated in terms of brand stretch. How much can the offering change or increase without damaging the professional approach and trustworthiness of the company? Therefore the brand stretch consists of two different issues: employees and the different tools for therapy. The therapists have to have proper pro-

fessional degree to work as an occupational therapist or physio therapist. The advantage, and point of difference when comparing with other private occupational therapist's receptions, is the variety of tools available (animals, nature, farm works, hand-crafts etc). Therefore it has to be evaluated how far the variety of different tools and methods can be expanded. Large variety can be an advantage but in excess it can be harmful for the brand. For example, a few different animals provide already a gran variety of opportunities and options for the patient, so getting new ones is not currently essential for the company.

The brand model itself is useful when introducing the company to new clients (both patients and to the party that aims to send patients to TerapiaLampola) and to new staff. So all in all, TerapiaLampola can implement the model to many aspects of the business: management, marketing, communications and planning.



## 4 Summary

This chapter summarizes the report by explaining the objectives of the research, research question and the research process. In addition, the brand model will be introduced in a general level to promote its usage for other small healthcare practices (why not for small companies in other industries as well). Finally, the chapter ends to the self-evaluation of the writer.

### 4.1 Answering to the research questions

As GREEN Communications stated in their Guide to creating a brand (2006, 16): “every business has already got a brand – at least in the customers and potential customers minds.” That was also the idea behind this thesis. Since, any company can be branded how to brand a company that represents a more unfamiliar area/industry for branding? Therefore the objective of this study was how to brand a small company of one to few people in an industry that is not that familiar with branding, and to create a brand that such a company can use.

The research question of the thesis was how to create a brand model for a small healthcare service. The brand model was created by collecting relevant theory about brand models, brand small businesses and branding healthcare, combining and finding similarities from the data gathered and designing the brand model from that basis.

The functionality of the model was tested by gathering customer/client responses towards the case company, implementing those into the model and comparing the results with the company’s existing brand message. The research revealed that the company’s existing slogan matches with the customers’ perception but more importantly, the model helped to construct the brand of the case company.

## 4.2 Branding small healthcare practices

In today's world customers can be picky and everything has to have a meaning or deeper reason. Therefore it appears, that even in healthcare, services are transferring into experiences, small private practices are increasing even in Finland as the public sector has outsourced many healthcare services while private institutions such as insurance companies are also buying services from the healthcare sector. This has led to a situation, where the amount of private small healthcare practices is in increase and has led small healthcare companies to struggle how to differentiate themselves from the other professionals while convincing the clients that they get the exceptional service they need.

The key concepts of branding small companies in the healthcare industry are simplicity, customer-client relationship and trust. However, the aim of a healthcare brand is not only to create trust, but when the customers trust to the company, it can fulfil its promise for the customer. The aim is to offer a service that fulfils the need of the customer with an added value. Therefore the relationship between a staff member (therapist, doctor, nurse etc.) and patient is highly important also from the brand point-of-view. What if the perception of the customer prior to the visit in the practice does not match with the outcome of the service? Therefore it is beneficial for a healthcare company to define its brand.

The brand model created for TerapiaLampola can help any small healthcare company to map down their brand without being too difficult for healthcare professionals to use. The model is simple, easy and does not require that much time nor effort for a small healthcare company to do it (a more thorough version of the brand model is located in appendix 3). It gives a small company the opportunity to review what people think about the company, what the company itself believe it does and values and (if they already have a slogan) does the slogan or brand message reflect the company the way it is supposed to.

Information needed for the brand model can be derived from the company as even the small companies should have mission, vision, their reason of being (values) and know what is their core business (brand performance). Furthermore, the four pillars help the company create its brand message, which can be then applied to marketing and communications (both internal and external). Alternatively, the model can be used to analyse whether the current brand message actually reflects the brand itself and the customers perceptions of the brand.

In essence, the brand model can be used as a strategic tool as well as an aid when introducing the company to new staff, clients or investors. Even the small companies in the healthcare industry should consider analyzing their company in terms of branding. After all, communicating the company better internally and externally does not have to be hard, especially with the help of the brand model.

### **4.3 The Thesis process and self-evaluation**

It was interesting for me to do this research. General theory about branding was easy to find but less information was available about branding small companies. Many articles intended to give guidelines about branding for small companies or direct instructions about branding to a certain industry that could have not been used in a company from the health care sector. I also searched articles related to branding in the healthcare industry and it turned out that only a very few models were presented and the sources mainly spoke of branding hospitals and large health care institutions.

As I had studied brand management prior to and during the writing process of this thesis, it was interesting for me to explore the opportunities of branding in an industry that had not been studied in the classes, nor were there much news about it. Before starting to plan this thesis, I don't recall reading any articles about branding health care. Therefore I had to use quite a lot of time to find out about branding in the healthcare industry and about branding small companies. Those articles were scarce but they gave some good ideas for TerapiaLampola's brand model.

The writing process itself took more time than planned due to other studies and work but on the other hand, this study was not written in a rush (as that might have damaged the outcome of this study). It has also been a very practical process because it helped the company to consider matters outside of its core business and processes that still have an impact on them, such as marketing, slogan, appearance of the company and so forth. Personally, I am pleased with the outcome of the research because it serves its purpose and can also help other small healthcare entrepreneurs to improve their companies.

#### **4.4 Further research**

As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, branding small healthcare companies is relatively new field of study with very little written about it. Therefore the opportunities of future research are diverse.

Branding existing companies is especially interesting topic, because there are many small healthcare practices in the world without any idea of branding. Therefore it would be beneficial for future research to study how to change the brand image of an existing small healthcare company and how the re-branding effects to customers' perceptions of the company.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1. TerapiaLampola's webpage

TerapiaLampola's official webpage as a whole. Created in 2007 and have been fairly updated since. <http://www.aulispalvelut.fi/Site/Etusivu.html>. Accessed first time: 29.9.2011.

**AulisPalvelut**  
TOIMINTATERAPIA



#### **TerapiaLampola**

- eläinavusteinen toimintaterapia
- puutarhaterapia
- ryhmäkäynnit
- lammastuotteet
- Suomen maatiaislampaiden, -kanojen ja -vuohien säilytys



#### **AulisPalvelut**


- toimintaterapia kotikäynteinä
- toimintaterapia ostopalveluina
- työkyvyn arvioinnit
- IMBA-koulutus
- vastaanotto myös HML Mehiläisessä

**Auli Laine**  
toimintaterapeutti, kouluttaja  
050-3514564  
Silakkamäentie 412  
11120 Riihimäki  
[auli.laine\(at\)aulispalvelut.fi](mailto:auli.laine(at)aulispalvelut.fi)

## Appendix 2. Advertisement of TerapiaLampola

TerapiaLampola's advertisement (in the bottom right corner) from a local magazine Rinva's winter 2012 issue.

**RINVA**  
**Yritys/yhdistys/yhteisö**  
**kannatusjäsenet**

Henkilö- ja yritys vakuutukset  Pohjola

**Riihimäen seurakunta**  
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**www.riihimaenseurakunta.fi**

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MONTTU SOIKOON!-festivaali 27.-28.7.  
Miljan Markkinat 28.7.  
www.miljanmonttu.fi  
Katiina Kallio

JOHN BUCHAN  
ALFRED HITCHCOCK  
PATRICK BARLOW  
maailma 30.1.2012  
ohjauks. PANU RAIPIA  
pääroolissa JUUKA LEISTI

**39**  
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myynti@mikropolix.fi  
huolto@mikropolix.fi

**Ylläpito**  
ma-pe 8-17  
Puh. 010 666 3023  
juha.makela@mikropolix.fi  
**www.mikropolix.fi**

Mikropolix Oy • Tehtaankatu 13 • 11710 Riihimäki

**AUTOASI**

**AUTOASI Korjaamo**  
**JT Salonen Ky**  
Kumerankatu 5  
11100 Riihimäki  
Puh. 019 - 723 444

Rinnan jäsenille huolloista -10%

**TerapiaLampola**  
-toimintaterapiaa maatilaympäristössä-  
Silakkamäentie 412, Ryttylä  
P.050-3514564  
aui.laine@aulispaalvelut.fi  
**www.aulispaalvelut.fi**  
-myös ryhmäkäynnit-



### Appendix 3. TerapiaLampola's extended brand model



## Appendix 4. Interview questions and responses

Questions of the interviews with the results. Survey questions were translated into Finnish for the purpose of that all the respondents were able to give the right answers for all the questions.

Ammatti:

1. Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija /Metropolia Amk.
2. Toimintaterapeuttiopiskelija / Metropolia Amk.
3. Proagria.
4. Proagria (2 henkilöä kirjoitti yhdessä).
5. Toimittaja.
6. Puheterapeutti, Riihimäen Terveyskeskus.
7. Toimintaterapeutti, Riihimäen Terveyskeskus.
8. Sostt, Perheneuvola (4 henkilöä samasta paikasta, täyttivät yhdessä).

1. Kuinka kuult ensimmäisen kerran TerapiaLampolasta?

1. Opettajilta Metropolia amk:ssa.
2. Koulun opinnäytetyön aiheiden esittelytilaisuudessa.
3. Auli kysyi yrityssuunnittelupalvelua investointeihin.
4. Osallistui yhteiseen koulutushankkeeseen.
5. Aulilta.
6. Työn kautta, työtoverilta.
7. Toimintaterapeuttien aluetapaamisessa tapasin Aulin.
8. Työkaverilta, mutta muistan nähneeni lehtijutun aikaisemmin.

2. Mikä TerapiaLampolassa herätti mielenkiintosi?

1. Luonto- ja elänelementtien hyödyntäminen Toimintaterapiassa.
2. Sen konsepti – Toimintaterapian ja luonnon+eläinten yhdistäminen.
3. Uusi, innovatiivinen tapa yhdistää 2 eri toimialaa.
4. Uusi toimintamuoto.
5. Yhteistyö, innovatiivisuus.
6. Terapian toteutusmahdollisuudet ”oikeassa” ympäristössä (vs. Vastaanotolla irrallaan potilaan arkielämästä).
7. Mielenkiintoinen, aktiivinen kolleega & toimintaterapian yhdistäminen eläimiin.
8. Eläinten käyttö terapiassa.

### 3. Mitä positiivista ja hyvää TerapiaLampolassa on?

1. Maaseudun elvyttäminen uusilla vaihtoehtoisilla elinkeinoilla. Hyvät isot terapiatilat.
2. Se on innovatiivinen, tuo toimintaterapiaa lähemmäs arkea.
3. Eläinten terapeuttinen vaikutus, mahdollisuudet terapiaan eri töiden kautta.
4. Eläinavusteinen terapia, terapia maatilaympäristössä, yritys hyödyntää maaseudun mahdollisuuksia.
5. Eläimet ja niiden käyttö terapiassa.
6. Eläimet, luonnonläheisyys, oikeat työt.
7. Mitä EI olisi?! Inhimillisyyden yhdistettynä alan toimintoihin maaseutua tukien.
8. Hyvät uudet tilat, lampaat ja vuohet, maatilaympäristö.

### 4. Mitä tulee mieleen kun kuulet sanat TerapiaLampola?

1. Lampaiden hyödyntäminen terapiassa, eläinavusteinen terapia.

2. Se on nimi joka herättää miettimään mitä se sisältää.
3. Kuntoutus, villa, idylli.
4. Sosiaali- ja terveydenhuolto, lampaat, ammattimaisuus/pätevyys, positiivinen fiilis.
5. Lampaat, Toimintaterapia, Auli Laine
6. Heinän tuoksu.
7. Terapia ja lampaat kotoisissa oloissa.
8. Lampaisiin yhdistetty terapia.

5. Mihin käyttötarkoitukseen/ minkälaiseen kuntoutukseen Terapialampola sopii Sinusta parhaiten?

1. Toiminnanohjauksen haasteiden kuntoutukseen, sosiaalisten tilanteiden harjoitteluun, paljon etuja verrattuna suljettuun terapiaympäristöön.
2. Todella kaikenlaiseen, en keksi mihin se ei sopisi. Miesasiakkaille voisi olla mielekäs koska tarjoaa ”miehekkäitä” ja käytännöllisiä toimintoja.
3. Toimintaterapian eri muotoihin, myös sosiaali pedagoginen toiminta.
4. Kaikkeen kuntoutustyöhön, jota voi tehdä toimintaterapeutin pätevyydellä. Fysioterapia, toimintaterapia, psyykkinen kuntoutus.
5. Kaikenlaiseen.
6. Toim. terapeuttiseen kuntoutukseen.
7. Monenikäisille, eri tavalla sairaiden/vammautuneiden terapiaan.
8. Lasten kuntoutukseen, mielenterveyspotilaitten kuntoutukseen.

6. Mitä Terapialampola tekee mielestäsi potilaan hyväksi?

1. Tarjoaa Asiakkaalle paljon erilaisia vaihtoehtoja kuntoutuksen toteuttamiseen.
2. Tarjoaa Asiakkaalle monipuolisen kuntoutusympäristön.

3. Potilas kuntoutuu siellä fyysisesti, että psyykkisesti.
4. Motivoiva kuntoutusympäristö, monipuoliset luontovaikutukset toimintakykyä ja psyykettä parantavasti.
5. Tarjoaa terapeuttisen ympäristön ja paljon muuta.
6. Tarjoaa esteettömän ympäristön, jossa on kuitenkin myös haastetta.
7. Haastavan ja maanläheisen ympäristön takia ja oppia ympäristöstä & itsestä.
8. Ottaa kokonaisvaltaisesti huomioon eri elementtejä.

#### 7. Miksi Mielestäsi yritys on tärkeä?

1. Edelläkävijä vaihtoehtoisten terapiaympäristöjen hyödyntämisessä.
2. Jotta myös sellaisille asiakkaille joille esim terveyskeskus ei ole mielekäs kuntoutusympäristö. Myös (suomen maantais)eläinkantojen säilyttäminen on tärkeää.
3. Terapian tarve on suuri, onnettomuuspotilaat ym.
4. Uranuurtaja, vaihtoehtoinen palvelumuoto ja –ympäristö.
5. Uutta, harvinaista, maanläheistä terapiaa.
6. Se on luonut terapeuttisen toimintaympäristön, jossa tehdään merkityksellisiä asioita.
7. Tarjoaa vaihtoehtoisen tavan ”perinteiselle” toim.ter. ympäristölle & toteutukselle.
8. Ei ole paljon tarjolla tällaista.

#### 8. Miten se auttaa asiakkaan kuntoutusprosessissa?

1. Mahdollistaa asiakkaalle mahdollisuuksia toteuttaa hänelle mielekkäitä toimintoja.
2. Tarjoamalla ammattitaitoista kuntoutusta virikkeellisessä ja monipuolisessa ympäristössä.

3. Vaikuttavuus kuntoutuksessa.
4. Kohta 4. (Motivoiva kuntoutusympäristö, monipuoliset luontovaikutukset toimintakykyä ja psyykettä parantavasti).
5. Monin tavoin, riippuu kuntoutuksen tavoitteesta.
6. Elämässä täytyy olla merkitystä.
7. Haastavan ja maanläheisen ympäristön takia.
8. -

9. Minkälaisten potilaiden luulet hyötyvän eniten TerapiaLampolan tarjoamista kuntoutusmuodoista?

1. Erityisesti toiminnan ohjauksen ja sosiaalisten taitojen haasteista kärsivien asiakkaiden.
2. Kaikenlaiset potilaat hyötyvät. Erityisesti mies-, psykiatriset-, mutistiset (mute) ja lapsiasiakkaat.
3. Kädentaidot, tunnetaidot.
4. Lähes kaikki, ainoa joille EI käy ovat ne ihmiset, jotka ahdistuvat luonnosta ja eläimistä.
5. Kaikenlaisten.
6. Lähettävä taho arvioi.
7. Monenikäisille, eri tavalla sairaiden/vammautuneiden terapiaan.
8. Toim. terapiaa tarvitsevat lapset.

10. Minkälaisten potilaiden luulet pitävän eniten TerapiaLampolan tarjoamista palveluista?

1. Luonnossa viihtyvien ja eläimistä pitävien asiakkaiden.
2. Lapset ja miehet. Luonnonläheiset ihmiset.

3. Eläimistä pitävät.
4. Joita on vaikea motivoida ”perinteisessä terapiatilanteessa”.
5. Lasten, nuorten, psykiatristen, vanhusten, KAIKKIEN.
6. Lasten, nuorten, aikuisten.
7. Lapset, nuoret ja vähän maatilaympäristöä kokeneet aikuiset.
8. Kaikille voi hyödyntää.

#### 11. Mitä luulet potilaiden ajattelevan terapiasta TerapiaLampolassa?

1. Uskon suhtautumisen olevan positiivista.
2. Hauskaa, mielenkiintoista, rauhallista, monipuolista.
3. Uskon että kokemukset tulevat olemaan positiivisia.
4. Varmasti herättää ihmetystä ja kysymyksiä ensin, mutta jatkossa motiivoiva ympäristö.
5. Suhteutuvan positiivisesti.
6. <3.
7. Positiivinen kokemus.
8. Riippuu potilaasta; arkoja voi rohkaista, levottomia rauhoittaa.

#### Muita kommentteja tai mielipiteitä:

1. Tilat todella hienot ja esteettömyys huomioitu hyvin. Internet-sivuilla voisi olla enemmän tietoa.
2. Kotisivuihin voisi panostaa. Voisi olla informatiivisemmat ja olisi mukava jos olisi kuvia tiloista.
3. -
4. -
5. Ryhmien hyödyntäminen jatkossa, hyvät tilat myös siihen.

6. -

7. -

8. -



## Appendix 5. Article of the inauguration of TerapiaLampola

The article that was published shortly after the launch event of TerapiaLampola in a local newspaper (divided into two pages).

6 Etelä-Hämeen Lehti

# TerapiaLampolan uuo

Elisa Saukko ja Martina Warsell: Maatila luo toimintaterapialle monipuolisen ympäristön

**Anu Ylimäki**  
HAUSJÄRVI

Eläinavusteinen terapia on yleistynyt maassamme viime vuosina. Tavallisin muoto siitä on terapiaratsastus mutta myös muiden eläinten kanssa toimimisella on havaittu olevan ihmisiin suotuisia vaikutuksia.

Hausjärveläinen toimintaterapeutti **Auli Laine** loi käsitteen ja toimintamuodon nimeltä TerapiaLampola jo kolme vuotta sitten. Kotimaisten maatiaiseläinrotujen säilyttäminen ja maaseudun elinkeinovalikoiman monipuolistaminen ovat hänelle tärkeitä arvoja. Maatilan ja toimintaterapian yhdistäminen oli lopulta hyvin luonnollista.

Nyt työ on saanut entistä paremmat puitteet, sillä Laineen kotitalalla on valmistunut uusi lampola, jonka yhteydessä on työtilat asiakkaiden vastaanottoa varten.

**Toimintaterapeutti Auli Laineella on tilallaan 18 lamasta, 6 vuohta ja joitakin kanoja. Kaikki eläimet ovat suomalaisia maatiaisrotuja.**



**Martina Warsell (vas.), Auli Laine ja Elisa S piassa.**



# lat valmistuivat

ANU YLIMÄKI



*“Vain mielikuvitus on rajana”*

## Virikkeellinen ympäristö

Laineen asiakkaista valtaosa on aikuisia, jotka tarvitsevat toimintaterapiaa kuntoutumiseen esimerkiksi aivohalvauksen tai autokolarin jälkeen. Asiakkaalla saattaa olla pulmia esimerkiksi käden käytössä, epätasaisessa maastossa kulkemisessa tai hahmottamisessa.

Monenlainen maatilaympäristö on ominainen tekeminen voi silloin hyödyttää asiakasta. Laine on hyödyntänyt asiakkaiden kanssa myös lampolan rakennusvaiheen tarjoamia mahdollisuuksia.

– Rakensimme vielä tyhjälle betonilattialle harkkotiilitä esteradan, hän kertoo.

Työmaalla pääsi myös kiipeämään tikkaita ja vasaroimaan. Vanhaa joustinpatjaa käytettiin trampoliinin korvikkeena. Maatilaympäristö antaa monipuoliset mahdollisuudet porrastaa harjoituksia helpoista vaikeammiksi asiakkaan tarpeiden ja edistymisen

mukaan.

– Vain mielikuvitus on rajana, Laine toteaa.

Jonkun verran asiakkaista on kouluikäisiä, joille keskittyminen tuottaa ongelmia. Eläimillä on tällaisiin lapsiin usein rauhoittava vaikutus.

Eläinterapia ei kuitenkaan voi olla Laineen mukaan itsestarkoituis. Asiakkaan tarpeet ja taustalla olevat faktat on aina otettava huomioon. Asiakas saattaa esimerkiksi pelätä eläimiä. Laine muistuttaa, ettei terapian onnistumista voi laskea eläinten varaan eikä kenenkään ole pakko puuhailla eläinten kanssa.

– On oltava suunnitelma ja sitten vielä pari varasuunnitelmaa, hän sanoo.

## Elämisen makua

TerapiaLampolan uudisrakennuksen avajaisissa vierailivat myös Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulusta hiljattain toimintaterapeutiksi valmistuneet **Elisa Saukko** ja **Martina Warsell**. He tekivät opinnäytetyönsä maatilaympäristön mahdollisuuksista toimintaterapiassa.

Työn yhteistyökumppanina heillä oli nimenomaan TerapiaLampola, jossa he videoivat ja havainnoivat asiakaskäynnin sekä haastattelivat Lainetta. Työ linkittyi Työtehoseuran hankkeeseen Green Care

– Vihreä hoiva maaseudulla

Saukko ja Warsell päätyvät opinnäytteeseensä siihen, että maatalo luo toimintaterapialle monipuolisen ympäristön. Avoimena terapiaympäristönä se mukailee todellista elämää.

– Tilanteet vaihtelevat, toiminnot nousevat luontevasti ympäristöstä, Warsell toteaa.

Keskeinen havainto näkyi opinnäytetyön nimessä, jolla on ”Tos tulee enemmän sielun elämisen makua”.

Heidän mielestään jatkossa tulisi selvittää, mitkä asiat kokevat toimintaterapian maatilalla.

Laine näkee, että maatilaympäristöllä saattaisi olla suotuisia vaikutuksia myös psykiatrisille asiakkaille se erityisesti miesasiakkaille, joille tila mahdollistaa monenlaisia toimintoja.

*“Tilanteet vaihtelevat ja toiminnot nousevat luontevasti ympäristöstä”*

ja maatilaympäristön hyödyntämiseen toimintaterapiassa